In the autumnal months no plant among us is more remarkable than the Phytolacca for its large size, and the fine colour of its clusters of berries. Its most general appellation is *Poke*, an abbreviation, perhaps, of *Pocan*, the name by which it was known in Virginia a century ago. In New England it is more frequently called *Garget*, *Cocum*, *Jalap* and *Pigeon berries.*

Jussieu has arranged this genus among his *Atriplices*, and Linnæus with the *Oleraceæ*.

The number of its stems and styles, place it in the class *Decandria* and order *Decagynia.* Its generic character consists in having *no calyx, a corolla of five petals, and its berries superior with ten cells and ten seeds.* The species *decandra* is the only one which strictly agrees with its class and order, and is known by having *ovate leaves, acute at both ends, and its flowers with ten stamens and styles.*

The root of this plant is of large size, frequently exceeding a man's leg in thickness, and is usually divided into two or three principal branches. Its substance is fleshy and fibrous, and easily cut or broken. Internally it is distinctly marked with concentric rings of considerable thickness, while its outer surface is covered with a very thin brownish bark, which seems to be little more than a cuticle. The stalks, which are annual, frequently grow to the height of six, and even nine feet. They are round, smooth, and very much branched. When young, their usual colour is green, but in most plants, after the berries have ripened, they are of a fine purple. The leaves are scattered, petioled, ovate-oblong, smooth on both sides, ribbed underneath, entire, acute. The flowers grow on long pedunculated racemes opposite to leaves. Peduncles nearly smooth, angular, ascending. Pedicels divaricated, sometimes branched, green, white, or purple, furnished with a small linear bracte at base, and two others in the middle. Calyx none. Corolla resembling a calyx, whitish, consisting of five round-ovate, concave, incurving petals. Stamens ten, rather shorter than the petals, with white, roundish, two lobed anthers. Germ greenish, round, depressed, ten furrowed. Styles ten, short, recurved. The flowers are succeeded by long clusters of dark purple berries, almost black, depressed or flattened, and marked with ten furrows on the sides.

The dried root is light coloured and spongy, with a mild and somewhat sweetish taste. A part of it is soluble both in water and alcohol, and neither of these substances renders turbid the solution in the other, unless the solution has been in-

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